CLAIMS

It is claimed:

1. A method of recommending web pages to a user, the user using a web browser on a local device to browse web pages, the local device comprising an input device and an output device, the web browser for requesting web pages and for outputting web pages to the output device, the method comprising the steps of:

providing plural categories of human interest, the categories having associated therewith respective scopes

activating a client on the local device

the web browser requesting a first web page

after the web browser requests the first web page, the client automatically obtaining a first one of the plural categories of human interest in which the first web page belongs

after the first one of the plural categories of human interest is obtained, the client automatically obtaining a first recommendation of a second web page which is in the first one of the plural categories of human interest

the client outputting a message to the output device which informs the user of the availability of the first recommendation

the user providing input to the client indicative of the user's desire to activate the first

recommendation, and in response the client causing the web browser to request the second web page

the web browser requesting the second web page

the web browser outputting the second web page to the output device.

2. The method of recommending web pages to a user of claim 1 wherein the step of the client obtaining the first recommendation is performed after the step of the user providing input.

3. The method of recommending web pages to a user of claim 1 wherein the client is an independent program.

4. The method of recommending web pages to a user of claim 1 wherein the step of automatic obtaining first one of the plural categories of human interest in which the first web page belongs is performed by the steps of:

providing a page categorization database comprising identifiers of web pages correlated to the plural categories of human interest

looking up the first web page in the page categorization database to thereby a first one of the categories of human interest corresponding to the first web page.

5.   The method of recommending web pages to a user of claim 4 further comprising the steps of:

the web browser storing a first resource locator corresponding to the first web page into an address bar object

the client copying the first resource locator from the address bar object and using the first resource locator for looking up the first web page in the correlation table.

6.   The method of recommending web pages to a user of claim 5 wherein the first resource locator comprises a uniform resource locator.

7.   The method of recommending web pages to a user of claim 1 further comprising the step of providing the user with the option to access a next recommended web page.

8.   The method of recommending web pages to a user of claim 1 wherein the output device comprises a display, and the web browser outputs web pages on the display.

9.   The method of recommending web pages to a user of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

the client automatically obtaining a second recommendation of a third web page which is in the first one of the plural categories of human interest

after the step of the web browser outputting the second web page to the output device, the user providing input to the client indicative of the user's desire to activate the second recommendation, and in response the client causing the web browser to request the third web page

the web browser outputting the third web page to the output device.

10. The method of recommending web pages to a user of claim 1 wherein the recommendation is provided to the user for free.

11. The method of recommending web pages to a user of claim 1 further comprising, after the step of the user providing input, assessing a charge against an account for making the first recommendation.

12. A computer-readable software program product for recommending web pages to a user in conjunction with plural categories of human interest, the categories having associated therewith respective scopes, the user using a browser on the computer to browse web pages, the computer comprising an input device and an output device, the browser for requesting web pages and for outputting web pages to the output device, the software comprising a set of instructions for causing the computer to:

monitor the browser and determine that the browser has requested a first web page

automatically obtain a first one of the plural categories of human interest in which the

first web page belongs

automatically obtain a first recommendation of a second web page which is in the first one of the plural categories of human interest

output a message to the output device which informs the user of the availability of the first recommendation

accepting a first user input which shows the user's desire to activate the first recommendation,

cause the browser to request the second web page.

13. The computer-readable software program product for recommending web pages to a user in conjunction with plural categories of human interest of claim 12 wherein the first recommendation is obtained after the user input is accepted.

14. The computer-readable software program product for recommending web pages to a user in conjunction with plural categories of human interest of claim 12 further comprising instructions for causing the computer to determine the first one of the plural categories of human interest in which the first web page belongs.

15. The computer-readable software program product for recommending web pages to a user in conjunction with plural categories of human interest of claim 12 wherein the instructions

for causing the computer to automatically obtain a first one of the plural categories of human interest in which the first web page belongs include instructions for causing the computer to look up the first web page in a page categorization database comprising identifiers of web pages correlated to the plural categories of human interest to thereby determine the first one of the categories of human interest corresponding to the first web page.

16. The computer-readable software program product for recommending web pages to a user in conjunction with plural categories of human interest of claim 15 further comprising instructions for causing the computer to copy a first resource locator from an address bar object of the browser and use the first resource locator for looking up the first web page in the page categorization database.

17. The computer-readable software program product for recommending web pages to a user in conjunction with plural categories of human interest of claim 12 further comprising instructions for causing the computer to provide the user with the option to access a next recommended web page.

18. The computer-readable software program product for recommending web pages to a user in conjunction with plural categories of human interest of claim 12 further comprising instructions for causing the computer to:

    automatically obtain a second recommendation of a third web page which is in the first one of the plural categories of human interest

accept a second user input which shows the user's desire to activate the second recommendation

cause the browser to request the third web page.

19. The computer-readable software program product for recommending web pages to a user in conjunction with plural categories of human interest of claim 12 further comprising instructions for causing the computer to assess a charge against an account for making the first recommendation.

20. A local device for browsing units of electronic content in conjunction with plural categories, the local device comprising:

an input device

an output device

a browser for requesting units of electronic content and for outputting the units of electronic content to the output device

a client for recommending units of electronic content to a user of the local device, the client including instructions to

monitor the browser and determine that the browser has requested a first unit of electronic content

automatically obtain a first one of the plural categories in which the first unit

of electronic content belongs

automatically obtain a first recommendation of a second unit of electronic

content which is in the first one of the plural categories

output a message to the output device which informs the user of the

availability of the first recommendation

accept a first user input which shows the user's desire to activate the first

recommendation,

cause the browser to request the second unit of electronic content.

21. The local device for browsing units of electronic content in conjunction with plural

categories of claim 20 wherein the first recommendation is obtained after the user input is

accepted.

22. The local device for browsing units of electronic content in conjunction with plural

categories of claim 20, the client further comprising instructions to determine the first one of

the plural categories in which the first unit of electronic content belongs.

23. The local device for browsing units of electronic content in conjunction with plural

categories of claim 20 wherein the instructions to automatically obtain a first one of the plural

categories in which the first web page belongs include instructions to look up the first unit of electronic content in a categorization database comprising identifiers of web pages correlated to the plural categories to thereby determine the first one of the categories corresponding to the first unit of electronic content.

24. The local device for browsing units of electronic content in conjunction with plural categories of claim 20, the client further comprising instructions to copy a first resource locator from an address bar object of the browser and use the first resource locator to look up the first unit of electronic content in the categorization database.

25. The local device for browsing units of electronic content in conjunction with plural categories of claim 20, the client further comprising instructions to provide the user with the option to access a next recommended web page.

26. The local device for browsing units of electronic content in conjunction with plural categories of claim 20, the client further comprising instructions to:

automatically obtain a second recommendation of a third unit of electronic content which is in the first one of the plural categories

accept a second user input which shows the user's desire to activate the second recommendation,

cause the browser to request the third unit of electronic content.

27. The local device for browsing units of electronic content in conjunction with plural categories of claim 20 further comprising instructions for causing the computer to assess a charge against an account for making the first recommendation.

28. A method of recommending electronic content to a user, the user using a browser on a local device to browse content, the local device comprising an input device and an output device, the browser for requesting content and for outputting the requested content to the output device, the method comprising the steps of:

providing plural categories

activating a client on the local device

the browser requesting a first unit of electronic content

after the browser requests the first unit of electronic content, the client automatically obtaining a first one of the plural categories of human interest in which the first unit of electronic content belongs

after the first one of the plural categories is obtained, the client automatically obtaining a first recommendation of a second unit of electronic content which is in the first one of the plural categories
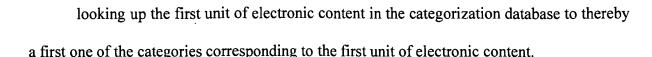
the client generating a message on the output device which informs the user of the availability of the first recommendation

the user providing input to the client indicative of the user's desire to activate the first recommendation

the browser outputting the second unit of electronic content to the output device.

29. The method of recommending electronic content to a user of claim 28 wherein the step of the client obtaining the first recommendation is performed after the step of the user providing input.

30. The method of recommending electronic content to a user of claim 28 wherein the client determines the first one of the plural categories in which the first unit of electronic content belongs.

31. The method of recommending electronic content to a user of claim 28 wherein the client is an independent program.

32. The method of recommending electronic content to a user of claim 28 wherein the step of automatic obtaining first one of the plural categories in which the first unit of electronic content belongs is performed by the steps of:

providing a categorization database comprising identifiers of unit of electronic content correlated to the plural categories

looking up the first unit of electronic content in the categorization database to thereby a first one of the categories corresponding to the first unit of electronic content.

33. The method of recommending electronic content to a user of claim 28 further comprising the step of providing the user with the option to access a next recommended unit of electronic content.

34. The method of recommending electronic content to a user of claim 28 wherein the output device comprises a display, and the web browser outputs unit of electronic content on the display.

35. The method of recommending electronic content to a user of claim 28 further comprising the steps of:

the client automatically obtaining a second recommendation of a third unit of electronic content which is in the first one of the plural categories

after the step of the browser outputting the second unit of electronic content to the output device, the user providing input to the client indicative of the user's desire to activate the second recommendation, and in response the client causing the browser to request the third unit of electronic content

the browser outputting the third unit of electronic content to the output device.

36. The method of recommending electronic content to a user of claim 28 wherein the recommendation is provided to the user for free.

37. The method of recommending electronic content to a user of claim 28 further comprising, after the step of the user providing input, assessing a charge against an account for making the first recommendation.